TASCAM used by First Judicial District



The First Judicial District is the judicial body governing the county of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, United States. It consists of the Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia County and the Philadelphia Municipal Court. In an effort to improve speech intelligibility in its various spaces, the court recently elected to deploy new microphones. Houser Audio of Aston, PA, founded by audio engineer Andre Houser,

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was contracted to design and deploy the best possible microphone setup throughout the courthouse. After careful consideration, he selected several hundred TASCAM TM-95GN Podium, Board Room & Conferencing Microphones. Houser has an extensive pro audio background including engineering for critical artists such as Prince, Ray Charles, and Peter Nero in addition to overseeing the audio of major national conventions and events such as the Super Bowl XL NFL Experience. He discussed his selection of the TASCAM TM-95GN microphones and the installation at the courthouse.

“With this being a courthouse, speech intelligibility was a crucial consideration on this project,” Houser explained. “The need to have all dialog be clear and easy to understand is imperative in an environment where important legal decisions are made. We selected the TASCAM microphones, which are primarily used for sound reinforcement throughout the various courtrooms. We installed six microphones in each of the 65 courtrooms: one for the judge, one for the witness, one for the prosecutor, one for the defendant, and two for the jury booth. In addition to installing the mics throughout all the courtrooms, we also deployed the microphones in one Jury Assembly room. The microphones are being used with phantom power supplied by an Alfatron matrix mixer.”

Reflecting on the TASCAM TM-95GN characteristics, Houser summarized the various attributes that made it a compelling choice for this project. “The TM-95GN’s windscreen effectively minimizes pops, and the gooseneck adjusts easily for ideal microphone placement,” he reports. “Overall sound quality is excellent. The On/Off switch on the microphone’s base allows for cleaner recordings and reduces feedback by enabling one to disable any unused mics. Equally notable, Judges like the ability to switch the mic off for sidebar conversations.”

“I also appreciate the fact that the microphone comes with an XLR cable,” Houser added, “which saved us quite a bit since it eliminated a considerable amount of cable that needed to be factored into the project. Additionally, the base is heavy and solidly weighted, which effectively keeps the microphone optimally positioned.” With many of today’s electronic audio products, it is not uncommon for questions to arise. Hence, responsive and capable customer support services are crucial. Here too, Houser was impressed with TASCAM. “Because of the number of microphones, we were going to deploy, our biggest concern was being able to secure the mics and keep the project on schedule. I’m pleased to report that TASCAM did not disappoint. We obtained the mics on schedule and everything that was to be included was there.”

The installation at The First Judicial District in Philadelphia took place in April 2024 and the equipment was placed into service immediately thereafter. Since that time, Houser reports the microphones are working well and everyone in the courthouse is pleased with their performance, “The court system has experimented with various microphone brands over the years, but they now (with this installation) are exclusively using TASCAM. We have received numerous compliments from judges and court staff, and reliability has been excellent. For a project where the finest

details can make all the difference in terms of a legal decision, the TASCAM TM-95GN mics are performing exceptionally well.”

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